9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

means (sending a *muzimu* to strangle somebody, acting through lightning or an animal, or using spells).[34]

What was the impact of this frightening world on the everyday life of Ruanda people? It seems that it was not ever-present in their daily lives. The Ruanda considered that most of the events in the human sphere as well as in the material world may be understood without reference to the action of the supernatural world. Some antecedent events or acts were considered as natural causes of the consequent ones. To get a cold at the beginning of the dry or rainy season was considered due to the change of weather. It was known that yaws could be got by contagion. Even death was very often interpreted without any magical explanation. It was expected for instance that people would die because of old age. When beans were sown on poor soil, a bad crop would not mean that the field had been bewitched. Thus when recurrences had been observed or when 'causes' had been discovered in the sphere of physical or human phenomena, events happening according to these recurrences or following their causes were considered as intelligible without any reference to the supernatural world. But when events appeared inexplicable in terms of these natural antecedents or causes, or were attended by some peculiar circumstances, intervention of spirits or sorcerers were suspected and a diviner was consulted. If somebody had tuberculosis and no one among his ascendants or the people with whom he lived had suffered from that disease, it was thought that the cause was a sorcerer. If somebody died from an illness usually considered 'natural', but his death occurred a few days after a theft of which he was the supposed culprit, he was said to have been magically striken at the request of the robbed person.

Even as regards his own death, the individual Ruanda seems to have taken a rather 'secular' view. All our informants agree that to die meant almost exclusively simply to quit life. They believed that they would become *bazimu*, but this left them rather indifferent. To abandon children, cows, fields, and friends was sad for people. But it was accepted without dramatization, as one of those facts which were in the normal order of things.

To sum up, freedom from want, frustrations, and objective fears was far from being achieved in Ruanda. Moreover, supernatural

[34] Cf. Czekanowski, 1917, pp. 302 f.; Arnoux, 1912-13; Pauwels, 1949b; Bourgeois, 1956.